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Involving Youth in Policymaking and Coordinating Youth Policy: State-Level Structures in California and Other States

*By Lisa K. Foster, MSW, MPA, and
Becky Gieck and Alicia Dienst, MSW Interns*

*Requested by Former Senator Dede Alpert, Chair
Senate Select Committee on Family, Child and
Youth Development; and
Assemblymember Dave Jones*

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Photographs

Photographs were provided by the California Center for Civic Engagement and Youth Development and the Youth Leadership Institute (page 2). Both of these organizations train youth to participate in state and local policymaking processes. Tom Turpel, Pacific News Service photographer, provided the photograph of the California Council on Youth Relations Roundtable (page 6).

Internet Access

This report is also available through the Internet at the California State Library's home page (www.library.ca.gov) under CRB Reports. The report is formatted for printing pages on both sides (back to back) so some pages are intentionally left blank.

OVERVIEW

POLICYMAKING AND YOUTH

Youth in the teen years and into young adulthood represent the future of society. Their wellbeing and education is extremely important, but assuring it can be difficult. For this reason, there is increasing interest and activity at the state and national levels relating to youth policy.* For example, the National Conference of State Legislatures, the National Governors Association Center for Best Practices (NGA), and the Forum for Youth Investment recently launched a two-year partnership to provide state policymakers with the tools to strengthen public policy affecting youth and to encourage youth participation in that process. This initiative is intended to help policymakers address, among other issues, how states can effectively involve young people in the policymaking process.

At the same time, there is a movement to better coordinate a wide array of youth services and programs. The NGA recently published a guide to “Children’s Cabinets” to assist states in developing collaborative governance structures that promote coordinating services for children and youth across state agencies. On the federal level, bipartisan legislation – H.R. 4703 – has been introduced that proposes to create a similar structure to evaluate, coordinate, and improve the myriad of federal youth programs.

California does not have a state-level youth policy promoting youth participation in program formulation and activities, nor does it have a state-level youth program coordinating structure. For this reason, the California Research Bureau conducted an all-state survey to identify the types of state-level participation and coordinating structures that other states have created. This report describes the survey findings, and also discusses federal efforts to coordinate youth programs and promote youth development.

YOUTH DEVELOPMENT AS A FRAMEWORK

Youth development is “...*the buzz. The talk. Everybody seems to be doing or promoting it... It has become common lingo in juvenile justice, adolescent research journals, nonprofit newsletters, meetings and forums across the private and public sectors and, increasingly, in state legislatures...*”†

WHAT IS YOUTH DEVELOPMENT?

Youth Development is a *process* that prepares young people to meet the challenges of adolescence and adulthood through a coordinated, progressive series of activities and experiences that help them to become socially, morally, emotionally, physically, and cognitively competent. This process addresses the broader developmental needs of youth.

National Collaboration for Youth

* There is no common definition of “youth” and age ranges vary among programs created to serve this population. For purposes of this report, the terms “youth,” and “young adult,” are used interchangeably and generally refer to young people ranging in age from 12 to 24.

† Finessa Ferrell, “Positive Youth Development: Making the Connections,” *National Conference of State Legislatures Legisbrief*, August/September 2004.

“Youth development” is a conceptual framework for evaluating programs, improving coordination across programs and diverse funding streams, and building more effective policies and programs for youth.¹ The youth development approach builds upon youth’s strengths, assets and potentials; viewing youth as valued resources. In contrast, deficit-based approaches focus solely on youth problem areas such as delinquency and teen pregnancy.

As a practical matter, youth development emphasizes providing a range of services and opportunities that support youth in gaining a sense of competence, usefulness, belonging, and worth. These opportunities include participating in decision-making and having their voices heard in formulating the policies and activities that may define their futures. A key youth development principle is engaging youth as active partners and leaders who can help move their communities forward.



Young people at the California Youth Advocacy Network Youthquest 2004 rally on the steps of the State Capitol bring focus to the use of tobacco in the movies. The Youth Leadership Institute, and San Mateo County’s Youth Organizing and Friday Night Live programs, were represented at this event.

YOUTH PARTICIPATION IN CREATING AND IMPLEMENTING STATE POLICY

*“Public policies affecting teens are stronger and more on target when youth are consulted. In the same way that finance legislation would never become law without input from the commerce lobby, youth-related policies are informed by youths’ viewpoints. Even policies not typically thought of as “youth issues” – such as land use or the environment – can benefit from youth input. ...youth bring different insights and viewpoints to the table.”**

YOUTH AT THE TABLE

The Legislature generally hears from youth during events like “Day at the Capitol” visits, rallies, and through legislative briefings and testimony. There have long been programs that bring youth to the State Capitol as interns or convene young people as a youth legislature. Increasingly, youth and adults seek to secure a place for youth “at the table” where decisions are made that affect them. Youth members can be found on a variety of task forces, boards, councils, and other entities. Several non-partisan organizations promote youth involvement in local and state policymaking based on their perceived benefits to the youth and policy outcomes.²

Benefits and Challenges

Young people have a lot to contribute. They bring energy and fresh and unique perspectives; they may offer ideas and solutions that have not been considered, or offer a new approach to an old idea. Youth also bring a unique range of knowledge about youth issues.

Involving youth in the policy process is challenging. They often need support, such as a youth-friendly environment, to be able to contribute effectively. Logistics, such as meeting times that do not interfere with school, and transportation, must be addressed. Confidentiality and other restrictions that pertain to youth under age 18 may affect their participation. In addition, they need adequate preparation, training, and tools (such as an understanding of the legislative process, their role and responsibilities, and how to work with elected officials).

Similarly, adults need support, preparation, and training to effectively work with youth. While it makes good sense to have young people participate in making decisions that affect them, it also runs counter to adults’ parental role and an almost instinctive need to ‘do what’s best’ for young people by making decisions for them. Often both young people and adults have to first learn to let go of stereotypes they each hold about the other. Young people must make a commitment to take on new roles and responsibilities

* Heather Balas, California Center for Civic Participation, *Engaging Youth in Policymaking Improves Policies and Youth Outcomes*, March 2003.

and learn to cooperate with different kinds of people, and adults often need to learn how to listen to what youth have to say, to be open to their energy and insights, and to respect the perspectives they bring.³

STATE-LEVEL YOUTH PARTICIPATION

Resolution to Recognize Youth Participation

In 2003, the California Senate passed Senate Concurrent Resolution (SCR) 40 (Chapter 133/Chesbro) to encourage the Legislature to establish March 28 as an annual day of recognition for programs, policymakers, and local governmental or educational entities that have successfully created youth participation and involvement programs, and for the youth who have been involved in those programs. SCR 40 further encouraged the Legislature to support prevention and early intervention programs and services. The Resolution states in part:

“Resolved, that the Legislature should determine youth involvement opportunities and link those opportunities to existing local government, school, and state programs that promote voluntary civic and community service, and be it further

Resolved, that the Legislature encourage individual Members of the Legislature to include local youth in their policymaking efforts ...”

*Current State Government Efforts**

Most California state department and programs that serve youth do not have formal mechanisms for involving young people in making the decisions that will affect them. Those that do have youth members and/or incorporate youth perspectives do so to varying degrees. The Regents of the University of California, for example, include a student Regent who is a full voting member of the Board.

“The Student Advisory Board on Education ... recommends that the State Board of Education encourage school districts that currently lack student representation on their boards to add a student board member position with preferential vote.”

“... The lack of value placed upon student opinion throughout the state is clearly demonstrated ... only 50% of California district school boards with high schools have a student board member. Students are consumers of education and should be able to voice their opinion on the system”

Student Advisory Board on Education, 2004

Following are other examples of youth participation in state government:

State Board of Education Special Position, Student Advisory Board on Education, and Student Advisory Board on Legislation in Education

One student occupies a special voting position on the State Board of Education that was created to increase

* This report provides an overview and some examples of youth participation in California state government. It does not describe all youth participation entities.

student voice in educational policy. This student – who represents 6.3 million students – is appointed by the Governor from a field of six young people who have participated in the Student Advisory Board on Education (SABE). SABE is a statewide conference that gives 12 students an opportunity to research problems, identify potential solutions, and directly address the State Board of Education on issues such as statewide high school graduation requirements and curriculum. The Student Advisory Board on Legislation in Education is a statewide conference like SABE. However, it offers students the opportunity to address legislators that develop and implement education policy.⁴

Workforce Investment Board State Youth Council

The Federal Workforce Investment Act (WIA) of 1998 established guidelines and a single funding stream designed to help low-income youth ages 14 to 21 become better prepared to enter the workforce. It mandated that that local Workforce Investment Boards – California has 50 – establish advisory youth councils. In 2001 the California Workforce Investment Board (CWIB) established a non-mandated State Youth Council (SYC) to provide assistance for local youth councils, guidance on the state's implementation of WIA, leadership for statewide youth development efforts, and to address critical issues affecting youth.⁵

SYC members are mainly adults, including State Board members, members of local boards, educators, youth development experts, youth service providers, and business and funding representatives. Youth participants include youth council members and youth representatives from youth leadership organizations. The SYC is currently inactive; its status is unknown pending completion of the California Workforce Investment Board restructure that is anticipated to be completed in 2005.

Youth Leadership Forum for Students with Disabilities

The Youth Leadership Forum for Students with Disabilities is a career leadership-training program for high school juniors and seniors with disabilities. Developed by the California Governor's Committee on Employment of People with Disabilities, it is being replicated nationally. Participants cultivate leadership, citizenship, and social skills through serving as delegates from their communities at a four-day event in the Capitol. The delegates are chosen through a statewide competition; they are representative of the state in terms of geography, gender, economic status, ethnicity, and types of disabilities.⁶

California Task Force on Youth and Workplace Wellness

The Wellness Task Force is a public/private endeavor launched by the State Legislature in 2002 to address physical fitness and nutritional health in state schools and workplaces. It creates and promotes programs and policies that will result in better health outcomes for children and communities. Task Force members include educators, health advocates, health providers, athletes, and legislators. In addition, the Task Force has two youth members who are also members of the Statewide Youth Board on Obesity Prevention.⁷

Another public/private effort is the California Council on Youth Relations (CCYR). The California Research Bureau and Pacific News Service, a non-profit news media organization, are developing this council as a formal speaker's bureau of young people to contribute to policy discussions on issues and decisions that shape the state's child welfare, juvenile justice, mental health, and education systems. Supported by grants from several foundations, the CCYR is sponsoring forums that bring youth together with researchers, practitioners, state officials, and advocates.

Private Non-Profit Efforts to Link Youth to State Policy

Several private, non-profit organizations – like the California Center for Civic Engagement and Youth Development and the Youth Leadership Institute – train youth to effectively participate in the state policymaking process by providing them with ongoing support, skills, and education.

The California Youth Connection (CYC), an advocacy organization of current and former foster youth, has developed a positive reputation as an important resource for developing and reviewing child welfare and foster care policy and legislation due to the unique perspectives of its members. As a result, CYC youth's recommendations and perspectives are routinely solicited and included in state-level policymaking in this area.



Youth presenting at the first California Council on Youth Relations Policy Roundtable: *Helping Us Heal – Foster Youth and Practitioner Perspectives on Mental Health and Mental Health Care*, 2005. Convened by Assemblymember Mark Leno, staff from state departments, the Health and Human Services Agency, and the Legislature, as well as representatives from foundations and advocacy organizations participated in the roundtable.

YOUTH PARTICIPATION – A SURVEY OF STATES

SURVEY OF STATES

CRB surveyed states to find out whether they provide an opportunity for youth to participate in “youth advisory councils” and whether they have a formal structure to coordinate youth programs and services (referred to as “collaborative councils”). Some states have both types of councils.

We conducted a telephone (and e-mail) survey of all states to identify and describe the range of state-level youth participation and collaborative structures. (See Appendix A for the survey questions.) In addition, we obtained information on state youth advisory councils and collaborative councils from several other sources that are identified at the end of Tables 1 and 3. Once the information was compiled, we sent the draft Tables to all state contacts for their review and edits.

If a state is not included in Tables 1 or 3, it generally means that there is not a youth advisory council or collaborative council in that state. An alternative reason is that a council exists; however, we were not able to locate any information about it.

YOUTH ADVISORY COUNCILS

Governors and/or legislatures in several states have established youth councils or similar structures that directly involve youth in shaping policy. These structures allow young people to express their opinions and points of view, and provide direct access to state policymakers. They also provide policymakers with a mechanism to hear the views of their young constituents. However, due to the unique politics of each state, youth advisory councils are not exactly alike although they may share similar characteristics and goals.

Nine states currently have state-level youth advisory councils. Most councils meet monthly or quarterly. However, some meet more intermittently (for example, Massachusetts’s council meets on an issue-by-issue basis).

Youth Participants

The ratio of youth to adults varies greatly from state to state. Council participants in Maine and New Mexico are all youth. Vermont’s Youth Councils require there be more youth than adult participants.

The selection processes for youth advisory councils range from appointments to application/selection processes. Youth in some states are selected based on academic performance. Other states seek to recruit and select youth that are representative of the youth population in relation to criteria such as ethnic, gender and geographic diversity. For example, Massachusetts observed that their youth are representative of the general

state population. New Mexico youth apply and are selected from each legislative district. They are required to have an adult mentor accompany them; therefore, the adult is also required to apply.

Structure and Authority

Youth advisory councils are generally established by executive order or legislation to advise the Governor and/or legislators on a range of policy issues. New Mexico's Youth Alliance was established by legislation, as were councils in Maine and North Carolina. Councils in Arizona, Missouri, and Nebraska were established by executive order. The remaining councils were established on an ad hoc basis or as a result of grant funding for that purpose.

Some youth advisory councils have community partners and stakeholders. For example, Arizona's youth council works with local officials including county supervisors. Other frequent partners are businesses, advisory groups, parents, and grassroots organizations. In some states, like New Mexico, private foundations join forces with youth advisory councils to provide support and funding. Universities are often included as partners. The University of Vermont, for example, produces reports for that state's regional youth councils.

Funding and Staffing

Funding for youth advisory councils comes from federal and state sources as well as private grants. Vermont's funding comes from the Department of Education's Safe and Drug Free Schools Program.

Four of the surveyed states have received federal funds from the Health and Human Services, Family Youth Services Bureau (FYSB), two states have received National Crime Prevention Council (NCPC) funding to develop and support innovative youth development strategies. In addition, two states received National Governor's Association (NGA) grants for technical assistance.

Youth advisory councils generally have at least one part-time employee; four states have full-time staff. Staff perform similar tasks in each state: their primary responsibility is to coordinate the council logistics, while youth participants determine the agenda and issues to be discussed.

Purpose and Activities

Youth advisory councils provide a youth voice and perspective to the governor and/or legislature on issues affecting youth in that state. Maine's council assesses issues, holds hearings, submits bill proposals, and identifies legislative priorities. New Mexico's council submits to the Governor an annual report on challenges and proposed solutions to issues facing youth. Iowa's Youth Action Committee chooses both the issues it will focus on and the advocacy method they will use.

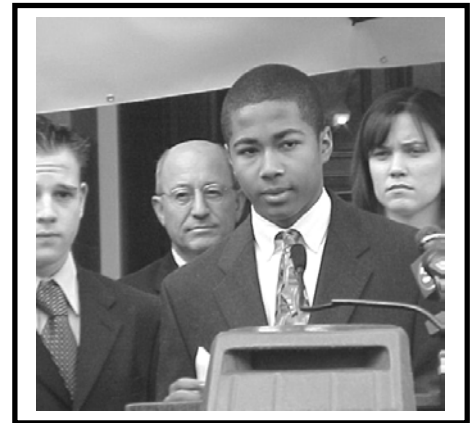
Missouri's previous governor created a Youth Cabinet to encourage young people to become more involved in government. The youth, ages 17-21, worked with department directors and functioned as senior public advisors. Vermont's youth councils also take a unique approach by having regional councils administer grants to the community in addition to reporting issues and concerns to state government.

Strengths and Challenges

States identified the following strengths and challenges relating to youth advisory councils in their survey responses:

Strengths

- *Youth Perspective:* Youth advisory councils provide a mechanism for legislators and policymakers to hear the youth perspective on specific policy issues *from youth*.
- *Diverse Youth Experiences:* Selection of youth from different geographical regions of the state provides different experiences and viewpoints.
- *Positive Development for Youth:* Participation on youth advisory councils provides youth with the experience of being valued for their perspective and point of view.



Member of the Statewide Youth Board on Obesity Prevention speaking in support of the 2005 State Task Force on Youth and Workplace Wellness' New Year Resolution to build and maintain a "healthy California."

Challenges

- *Funding:* Securing ongoing funding is difficult. In addition, there are often other barriers such as inflexible mandates tied to funding.
- *Logistics:* Organizing youth members and getting them to meetings is often difficult due to their school and activity schedules and need for transportation.
- *Youth/Adult Relationship:* Negotiating a new relationship between adults and youth is difficult, particularly one in which adults respect and listen to youth, and youth learn to work with adults as partners.

An additional challenge is securing and *maintaining high-level political support* for youth participation in the policy process. For example, Missouri's current governor has not activated the Youth Cabinet created by his predecessor.

TABLE 1 STATE GOVERNMENT STRUCTURES: YOUTH ADVISORY COUNCILS

STATE	STRUCTURE & AUTHORITY	FUNDING & STAFFING	PURPOSE & ACTIVITIES	STRENGTHS & CHALLENGES
Arizona <i>FYSB</i> <i>NCPC</i>	Governor's Youth Commission <i>Executive</i>	<i>Funding:</i> Federal (Safe & Drug Free Schools and Communities Grant) <i>Staffing:</i> 2 part-time	To advise the Governor and the Governor's Office for Children, Youth and Families on issues affecting youth in Arizona	<i>Strengths:</i> Diversity (geographic and ethnicity), strong application/interview process, and support from Governor <i>Challenges:</i> Communication between meetings, as members located throughout the state
Iowa <i>FYSB</i> <i>NCPC</i> <i>NGA</i>	State of Iowa Youth Action Committee <i>Informal</i>	<i>Funding:</i> Points of Life Foundation Grant <i>Staffing:</i> 1 part-time, interns	Advise state policymakers on youth issues; hold community forums on legislative priorities	<i>Strengths:</i> Relationship with Governor; youth advocating on behalf of youth <i>Challenges:</i> Lack of funding and permanent staff; meeting logistics
Maine	Standing Youth Advisory Council <i>Legislative</i>	<i>Funding:</i> State; Federal <i>Staffing:</i> Φ Φ = info not available	Assess issues and establish legislative priorities, submit bill proposals and hold hearings	<i>Strengths:</i> Well-coordinated systems; youth have identified needs; accountability to youth <i>Challenges:</i> Meeting logistics; funding
Massachusetts <i>FYSB</i> <i>NGA</i>	Youth Network Team <i>Informal</i>	<i>Funding:</i> State; Federal <i>Staffing:</i> 1 full-time, 1 part-time	Establish and support youth development programs for state and localities; address needs of youth in transition	<i>Strengths:</i> Innovative; effective policy and legislative changes <i>Challenges:</i> Youth turn-over; meeting logistics; funding; partnership dynamics between youth and adults

TABLE 1 STATE GOVERNMENT STRUCTURES: YOUTH ADVISORY COUNCILS

STATE	STRUCTURE & AUTHORITY	FUNDING & STAFFING	PURPOSE & ACTIVITIES	STRENGTHS & CHALLENGES
Missouri*	Governor's Youth Cabinet <i>Executive</i>	<i>Staffing:</i> None	Advise state policymakers on youth issues and provide opportunity for youth to be engaged	<i>Challenge:</i> Youth Cabinet has not been continued under current governor
Nebraska <i>FYSB</i>	Governor's Youth Advisory Council <i>Executive</i>	<i>Funding:</i> Federal <i>Staffing:</i> Φ	Increase communication among youth, community, and government; move focus to youth assets; increase youth/adult partnerships; and provide youth representation	<i>Strengths:</i> Youth driven; youth have access to Governor and Senators <i>Challenges:</i> Meeting logistics, formal format for Gov. meetings
New Mexico	New Mexico Youth Alliance <i>Legislative</i>	<i>Funding:</i> Grant <i>Staffing:</i> 1 full-time	Report to Governor on challenges and solutions regarding issues youth face	<i>Strengths:</i> Youth are diverse; lawmakers hear directly from youth; youth are great expert witnesses <i>Challenges:</i> Hard to schedule meetings because youth are busy
North Carolina*	North Carolina Youth Council (YC) North Carolina Youth Advisory Council (YAC) <i>Legislative</i>	<i>Funding:</i> State; Grants <i>Staffing:</i> 1 full-time	YC– Promote statewide activities; make recommendations to state/local governments; and elect youth representatives to YAC YAC– Advise youth councils in state; promote leadership and citizenship; recommend expenditures	<i>Strengths:</i> Provides valuable opportunity for youth to learn leadership and advocacy skills, promotes youth development <i>Challenges:</i> Funding (youth have to pay their own registration fees)

TABLE 1 STATE GOVERNMENT STRUCTURES: YOUTH ADVISORY COUNCILS

STATE	STRUCTURE & AUTHORITY	FUNDING & STAFFING	PURPOSE & ACTIVITIES	STRENGTHS & CHALLENGES
Vermont	Youth Councils (12) <i>Informal</i>	<i>Funding:</i> Federal <i>Staffing:</i> 1 full-time, 12 part-time	Provide youth with authority; have them solicit and distribute grants, and gain a sense of feeling valued	<i>Strengths:</i> Valuable opportunity; learn to administer and monitor funds; youth do well when treated as competent <i>Challenges:</i> Funding; staffing; partnership dynamics between youth /adults

FYSB = This state received funding from the Family Youth Services Bureau

NCPC = This state received funding from the National Council on Crime Prevention

NGA = This state received technical assistance from the National Governor's Association Center for Best Practices

*Information for these states was obtained from following sources: *Youth Boards, Commissions, Councils, Task Forces* (2004), *Civic and Policy Engagement of Youth* (2004), and *Youth Programs*, National Conference of State Legislatures; *State Youth Development Strategies to Improve Outcomes for At-Risk Youth* (2000) and *A Governor's Guide to Children's Cabinets* (2004), NGA Center for Best Practices; *Innovative State Strategies to Promote Youth Development* (2002) and *How Youth Become Effective Citizens: Models for Engaging Youth in Policy* (2003), American Youth Policy Forum; *FOCUS: State Youth Policy, Principles for Supporting Youth* (2002), The Forum for Youth Investment; and the Department of Health and Human Services, Family and Youth Services Bureau.

**YOUTH COUNCIL PROFILE:
NEW MEXICO YOUTH ALLIANCE INITIATIVE
AND YOUTH ADVISORY COUNCIL**

New Mexico involves youth in state level policymaking through its **New Mexico Youth Alliance Initiative**. Participation in the Alliance introduces youth to the legislative process and gives them the opportunity to demonstrate leadership (at the state level and in their communities), and create partnerships with adult policymakers. The Alliance also provides adults with a chance to learn how to communicate and work better with youth.

The Alliance Initiative consists of a diverse group of 112 young people – representing each legislative district in New Mexico – who make up the **Youth Advisory Council**. Any student from 14 to 19 years old can apply to serve on the Council. Council members identify an adult mentor to work with them. They also create a youth peer group in their district to provide and review ideas for community change.

The Youth Advisory Council meets four times each year to discuss youth issues and present solutions to the Governor (twice a year directly), Lt. Governor, and the Children’s Cabinet. (The Children’s Cabinet was created by executive order to oversee and coordinate state agency efforts to promote and establish comprehensive policies affecting children and youth, and to maximize resource allocation). The Council proposes policies and legislation in an annual report and advises lawmakers about issues and concerns.

Evolving from the Children’s Cabinet, the Alliance was established in statute in 2003 through the Youth Council Act “to encourage young people throughout New Mexico to consider and discuss the problems they face and to develop possible solutions for presentation to the Governor, Lt. Governor, and Legislature.” The Act did not contain funding and, as a result, the Alliance was created as a unique public/private partnership between the State and the New Mexico Forum for Youth in Community, a nonpartisan, nonprofit youth development organization that facilitates youth civic engagement. The legislative mandate protects the Alliance from changes in the political climate by ensuring its continued existence. Its supporters count the Governor’s commitment to its success as one of its strengths.

Additional information about the New Mexico Youth Alliance and the Youth Advisory Council can be found at the Lieutenant Governor’s website at:
<http://www.ltgovernor.state.nm.us/youthalliance.html>.

COORDINATION EFFORTS IN CALIFORNIA

STATE AGENCIES SERVING YOUTH

Six departments under the Health and Human Services Agency – Mental Health, Health, Social Services, Developmental Disabilities, Alcohol and Drug Programs, and Employment Development – administer a range of youth programs and services. These include work- and experience-based programs, prevention programs targeted at teen-age pregnancy and substance use, and independent living programs for foster youth who will soon be leaving the foster care system.

The Juvenile Justice Division provides education, training and treatment services to youth in state correctional facilities. The Correctional Standards Authority funds mentoring programs. Both are under the newly formed California Department of Corrections and Rehabilitation. The Department of Justice funds programs focusing on gangs and youth violence prevention.

The California Conservation Corps, under the Resources Agency, furnishes youth 18 to 25 with training and education services while serving in the Corps. The California Service Corps administers programs, like AmeriCorps, that provide community services programs and direct services such as mentoring and tutoring. The Department of Education, Community Colleges, State Universities, and the University of California offer a range of programs and services, including mentoring, tutoring, and school violence prevention. Additional state agencies, such as the California Office of Traffic Safety, provide grants and programs that target youth.

COORDINATING YOUTH SERVICES AMONG STATE AGENCIES

Unlike some states, California does not have a formal state-level structure or mechanism that requires planning and coordination across these departments in relation to policies, programs and services for youth. Coordination generally occurs on an ad hoc, issue or program-specific basis. For example, legislation may require that several departments work together to implement a program or initiative. In some cases, state agencies initiate coordination efforts around a specified goal or purpose, such as assisting foster youth who are leaving the foster care system when they turn 18. An example is the “Shifting the Focus” effort, in which several state agencies and departments joined together to coordinate their efforts to prevent youth violence.

LISTENING TO OUR YOUTH: POLICY RECOMMENDATIONS

In 2000, the California Assembly Select Committee on Adolescence held a series of public hearings and discussion groups to provide guidance on how to support the healthy growth and development of the state’s youth. They recommended, in part, that the state:

- Integrate services to meet comprehensive needs, strengthen continuity, simplify eligibility, and maximize existing resources to ensure tax dollars are spent wisely, and
- Strengthen leadership, collaboration, and responsibility for youth services.

California Assembly Select
Committee on Adolescence

Why is coordination important? Over the years, numerous state programs and services for youth have been funded and implemented. However, in some cases, the state's "right hand" hasn't known what its "left hand" (or sister agency) was doing – different departments provide similar programs and services, and some target populations are offered several services and programs while other youth populations go unserved.

Coordination allows the state to reduce or avoid duplication, improve service delivery, and address service gaps by departments. This is especially important when funds and other resources are limited. It can result in improved access to information through sharing data and adopting uniform standards for data collection and reporting.

Many issues are complex and cross the boundaries between departments. Efforts to address these issues must also cross departmental boundaries. Youth violence, for example, encompasses criminal justice, health and human services, and education; substance abuse and employment are also factors involved in this issue.

"Shifting the Focus" Collaborative

"Collaboration is the process by which several agencies or organizations make a formal, sustained commitment to work together to accomplish a common mission."^{*}

"Shifting the Focus" formed during the late 1990s as an informal interagency collaborative focused on youth violence prevention. Under the leadership of the Attorney General, the Secretary of the Health and Human Services Agency, and the Superintendent of Public Education, participants included leaders from over 22 state agencies, the Senate, local governments and non-profit organizations.[†] Its members were committed to shifting away from isolated departmental efforts focusing on intervention, toward taking a broader collaborative approach that would more effectively address and prevent youth violence and contribute to healthier and safer communities.⁸

The collaborative and the Attorney General's Office conducted a series of hearings around the state in 2000 and 2001 to hear from local government and service providers how government could improve services. As a result, it identified specific ways the state should restructure itself to help local communities reduce crime and violence and help young people reach their full potential. "Shifting the Focus" provided testimony to the Little Hoover Commission, and the Commission's 2001 report, *Never Too Early, Never Too Late to Prevent Youth Crime and Violence*, recommended that the collaborative's approach be institutionalized to promote more effective delivery of violence prevention

^{*} *The Community Collaboration Manual*, National Assembly of National Voluntary Health and Social Welfare Organizations.

[†] Participating state agencies included the Departments of Aging, Alcohol and Drug Programs, Community Services and Development, Corrections, Education, Health Services, Mental Health, Rehabilitation, and Social Services; Office of the Attorney General; California Conservation Corps; California Highway Patrol; California Youth Authority; Community College Foundation; Governor's Office of Planning and Research; and Health and Human Services Agency; Managed Risk Medical Insurance Board; Office of Statewide Health Planning and Development; and the Little Hoover Commission.

services. It also developed strategies and tools that agencies and organizations can use in prevention efforts.*

In 2001, the National Crime Prevention Council (NCPC) and the nonprofit Prevention Institute launched the “Embedding Prevention in State Policy and Practice Initiative” to promote and implement prevention movements within six states, including California. The two organizations provided technical assistance, research, and funding. The “Shifting the Focus” collaborative became the California team – the California Interagency Prevention Partnership – for this initiative. The initiative’s goal was to encourage state government to recognize the value of prevention. The focus of the Partnership shifted towards specific issues, including youth development.

The Partnership disbanded after the loss of NCPC funding. However, several of the Partnership’s members remain involved in the collaboratives described below.

State Agencies Collaborative for Mentoring and Youth Development

In 2000, representatives of the legislature, Governor’s Office, state departments, and private youth-serving agencies established an informal collaborative around mentoring, a primary youth development activity. The focus of this collaborative evolved to embrace all youth development activities and later morphed into the related collaborative on youth development.

California Collaborative for Youth Development

Following the 2002 Youth Development Summit (see box), several participants established the California Collaborative for Youth Development (CCYD). Its purpose was to continue a dialogue and encourage activities to promote youth development, instill its principles in state and local policy, and further program coordination. Like the previous collaborative, the CCYD included representatives of the legislature, state departments, the Governor’s Office, and non-profit community youth organizations.

To assist policymakers in creating and supporting policies that reflect youth development principles, the CCYC developed a guide to use when creating,

CALIFORNIA YOUTH DEVELOPMENT SUMMITS

State Senator Dede Alpert (Chair, Senate Select Committee on Family, Child, and Youth Development), the California Department of Education, and the National Academy of Sciences’ Board on Children, Youth, and Families co-sponsored the first Summit in 2002. Participants included youth, legislators and staff, and state and local leaders in law enforcement, education, mental health, probation, and social services. The agenda included sharing current research and developing an action plan for applying youth development principles to public policy.

In 2003, the second Summit brought youth, policymakers, and practitioners together. Participants focused on how to collectively move forward with ideas and actions to promote youth development in policy and programs. Work on this goal continued at the 2004 Summit, an interactive videoconference that linked participants at selected county offices of education throughout the state.

* “Shifting the Focus” materials are available at www.preventioninstitute.org/shiftdindex.html.

modifying, supporting, or funding youth policy or programs. This tool, *Policymakers: A Checklist of Youth Development Principles*, is in Appendix B.

The CCYD continues to meet periodically. However, its membership – especially legislative and state agency involvement – has fluctuated over recent years. Since the Senate Select Committee on Family, Child and Youth Development expired in 2004, there has been no legislative representation. In addition, the collaborative currently lacks the support and participation of high-level state officials.

“A Shared Vision For Youth” Partnership

The 2003 White House Task Force for Disadvantaged Youth report proposed implementing a youth policy initiative (the Task Force and initiative is described on page 35). California is one of several states participating in this federal initiative. It uses a collaborative approach to prepare disadvantaged youth to successfully take on adult roles and responsibilities, and succeed in today’s economy. Like their federal counterparts, the Employment Development Department, the Departments of Justice and Education, and the Health and Human Services Agency are coordinating their policies and programs to better address the needs of disadvantaged youth, such as those aging out of the foster care system.

STATE LEGISLATION

Table 2 (pages 19-20) identifies recent state legislation that proposes to create or promote state-level coordination and collaboration of youth programs and policy. The most ambitious piece of legislation to date is Senate Bill 215.

Youth Policy Act and California Youth Policy Council

Senate Bill (SB) 215, introduced by Senator Dede Alpert in 2003, proposed to create the Youth Policy Act and a California Youth Policy Council (CYPC) within the Governor’s Office to promote youth development and coordinate state youth programs and policy. The Council was intended to provide the mechanism for policymakers across state systems (education, health, human services, youth employment, and juvenile justice) to plan and act in new, cross-sector ways to maximize state resources to promote positive outcomes.

Placing this coordinating body in the Governor’s Office would have provided it with the authority to require collaboration and coordination by all of the youth-serving departments. The CYPC would have developed an overarching multidisciplinary youth policy framework to guide, coordinate, and monitor youth services across departmental lines. It proposed to:

- Conduct ongoing assessments of the array of state services, supports, and opportunities available to youth.
- Develop strategies for streamlining state procedures and avoiding costs.

- Create common standards for assessing whether state policy promotes positive youth development, and a cross-sector method for collecting and reporting youth outcome indicators.
- Establish evaluation criteria and program quality standards to be applied across departments and agencies, and develop capacity building strategies to assist departments and agencies to meet and exceed those standards.
- Strengthen alliances among youth organizations and individuals across systems.

Governor Schwarzenegger vetoed SB 215. His veto message stated that statutory authority was not necessary to create advisory councils, and that the Legislature and Administration already had several existing resources from which to get advice.

TABLE 2 California Legislation Related to State-Level Coordination			
Date	Bill Number/ Author	Description	Status
2004	ACR 184 (Chan)	Would establish the Joint Committee on California's Children, with a specified membership, to develop strategies to coordinate planning and policy development for state-administered children's and youth programs.	Died at Desk
2003	SB 215 (Alpert)	Would enact the Youth Policy Act and create the California Youth Policy Council (CYPC) within the Governor's Office to promote youth development and coordinate state youth programs and policy. The CYPC was intended to provide a mechanism for state agencies to plan and act in new, cross-sector ways to maximize state resources across departmental lines.	Vetoed
2002	SB 1650 (Alpert)	Created the Governor's Mentoring Partnership and encouraged state agencies to collaborate to build developmental assets in youth.	Enacted Chap. 355 (2002)

TABLE 2 California Legislation Related to State-Level Coordination

Date	Bill Number/ Author	Description	Status
2000	SB 596 (Alpert)	Would have enacted the California Volunteer Mentor Partnership Act and the Governor's Policy Council on Youth Development. The council would have included specified state departments such as the Dept. of Justice, California Youth Authority, and Education, and the Health and Human Services Agency. The bill proposed an organizational framework to provide state leadership and collaboration in support of youth development.	Died in Assembly
2000	SB 347 (Alpert)	Original bill would have established the California Commission on Children, Youth, and Families to evaluate programs related to children and families, and make recommendations to the Governor and Legislature regarding related issues. It would also have assumed the duties of the Child Development Policy Advisory Committee.	Gutted and amended for another purpose
1998	SB 2155 (Alpert)	Would have created the California Commission on Children, Youth, and Families and appropriated \$149,000 from the General Fund to support commission activities. The Commission would have reviewed state programs and made recommendations to improve quality of life for children, youth, and families. The Commission would also have developed an annual strategic plan.	Died in Assembly

COORDINATION EFFORTS IN OTHER STATES

Governors and legislatures in several states have established state-level governance structures for implementing a shared vision and coordinating efforts across state agencies to improve services and programs, and maximize resources, for youth. The National Governor's Association (NGA) Center for Best Practices reports that at least 16 states have established Children's Cabinets to accomplish these goals.* In some states, state agencies have initiated informal coordination efforts among themselves.

COLLABORATIVE COUNCILS

The term "collaborative council" is used to describe state structures whose primary purpose is to coordinate youth programs and services. Although they may be diverse in structure, composition and other characteristics, collaborative councils generally share common features.

At least 28 states have a collaborative council in which state departments partner to facilitate communication, coordinate services and resources, and promote youth development. Some of these councils are targeted at all children, including youth (these are often called "Children's Cabinets"). Most of these entities were established during the 1990s, although Connecticut's collaborative council dates back to 1985.

Structure and Authority

In contrast to previous coordinating bodies that typically brought mid-level program staff together around a specific problem, collaborative councils increasingly involve the heads of multiple state agencies (social services, health, mental health, education, juvenile justice, employment, etc.) working toward shared goals that address a broad spectrum of policies and programs. According to their proponents, collaborative councils set new standards for interagency collaboration as they have the power to bring together the state agencies whose cooperation is needed to make youth development work.⁹

Some councils include members of the legislative and judicial branch, and the Superintendent of Education, in addition to executive branch department heads. In two states – Georgia and Maine – the First Lady chairs the collaborative council.

NATIONAL GOVERNORS ASSOCIATION: PLATFORM ON YOUTH DEVELOPMENT

There are four measures all states can take to advance youth development:

- Create governance structures for youth development
- Develop and formalize service integration frameworks
- Establish shared accountability among agencies through common outcomes
- Work with local governments to integrate services and funding more effectively

* The NGA Center for Best Practices has published "A Governor's Guide to Children's Cabinets," available online at <http://preview.nga.org/Files/pdf/0409GOVGUIDECHILD.pdf>. This publication provides a comprehensive roadmap for designing and implementing a Children's Cabinet.

In addition to councils that interact solely at the state level, collaborative councils also interact with local partners and promote coordination among state and local level policymakers. Many councils include representatives of key stakeholders from the local level, including community organizations, local government agencies, local elected officials, and private sector representatives.

Council meetings are generally held on a regular – monthly or quarterly – basis. Communication modes vary from state to state. Most councils report directly to the governor or legislature, either verbally or through written reports.

Nine of the collaborative councils identified in the survey were established by legislation; nine were established by executive order (with another one anticipated this year). Two collaborative councils were established by executive order followed by legislation. In the remaining states, collaborative councils were formed in a number of ways: through governor appointments, grants establishing the council's framework, and individual parties or organizations taking the lead in forming the council.

Youth Involvement

According to our survey, eight states include youth. (It is not known whether youth participate on councils in five states.) Among the state councils with participation, the ratio of youth to adults varies greatly. In Arizona youth make up one-third of the collaborative council. In Delaware, youth representation varies from meeting to meeting. In North Dakota there is one youth and 16 adults.

The average age range of youth participants is 14 to 24 years old. Some states use an application process while others use an appointment process, generally from a state or community organization, and ensure that specific geographic regions in the state are represented. In some states, participants are selected on the basis of their academic performance or other factors. One contact stated that youth participants are chosen based on “who they [the youth] know.” There are other youth involvement models: youth representatives on Maine's Children's Cabinet come from the Statewide Communities for Youth Network.

Funding and Staffing

Many collaborative councils do not have an on-going, dependent source of funding. Sources of funding vary among states; they include federal and state funds, and private grants. Almost half of the collaborative councils have received federal funding, primarily from the Department of Health and Human Services, Administration for Children and Families, Family and Youth Services Bureau (FYSB). State sources have been used to fund youth development activities in several states. About one-third of state collaborative councils have received grant funding from private foundation and non-profit sources.

Most states stress the importance of staffing to ensure the success of their collaborative councils. Connecticut and West Virginia each have six full-time employees for their councils. Almost half of the states have two or fewer full-time staff. Arizona and Iowa have one full-time staff person supplemented with one part-time staff. Some councils are staffed by employees from participating state departments that donate some of their time. Seven states report that they have no identified staffing; New York and Rhode Island lost their staffing when their federal funding ended.

Purpose and Activities

Collaborative councils' primary purpose is to create an environment where state agencies – often with community partners – work together to coordinate programs and services targeted at youth. Councils in several states aim to affect public policy. For example, the purpose of the Kentucky Youth Development Partnership is “to foster collaboration of youth services at the state and local level and promote positive youth development.”¹⁰

Major activities include identifying goals and priorities, creating strategic plans, and making policy and funding recommendations. Councils in New York and Vermont provide technical assistance, research and/or training on youth development. Other state councils develop manuals and other resources. Community mobilization is an important function in some states (Iowa and Rhode Island).

Most state councils have specific issues or outcomes they wanted to address. Montana has promoted efforts to reduce youth risk behaviors. Louisiana has supported the implementation of the state's juvenile justice reform legislation.

Many children's cabinets establish measurable outcomes to help them determine their progress toward meeting their established goals (see profile of Maine on page 25). Iowa's Collaboration for Youth Development aspires to produce programs that are results-based. Councils in Arizona, New York, Vermont and New Mexico conduct annual assessments. Connecticut and Maine conduct pre- and post-tests of the population they serve. Massachusetts and Vermont use universities to conduct assessments. In addition, Louisiana's governor recently added a new university-based Children's Cabinet Research Council to provide information on research-based programs and strategies and assist in monitoring and evaluating the Cabinet's efforts.

Strengths and Challenges

States identified the following strengths and challenges related to their collaborative council:

Strengths

- *Commitment from State Leaders.* A strong commitment by the Governor, state government, and institutional leaders to youth development, and the political will to carry out their vision is important for success. An ongoing commitment and

buy-in from a variety of state agencies to a common youth development plan is an important related element.

- *A successful youth development component.* The council is based on youth development principles; youth are seen as assets and their participation provides an opportunity to develop leadership and decision-making skills. Conversely, adults have the opportunity to learn about youth culture and experiences.
- *A strong organizational structure.* The collaborative councils in several states include community partners, and they have a high level of collaboration and inclusiveness. Highly qualified national experts are involved with several projects and the projects have the technical assistance, background, and resources to move forward.
- *A permanent structure in government.* An established, permanent structure provides the opportunity to produce non-partisan information, and provides better access to and communication within the state government.

CHALLENGES IN ESTABLISHING COLLABORATIVE COUNCILS

Grandiose Goals – A council that over promises and then doesn't deliver because of a lack of funds, political support, or staff does more harm than good. Such failures sap the energy and excitement from supporters and undermine the council's credibility and future collaborative efforts.

Weak Foundations – To be most effective, councils need to become institutionalized within state government. This means being written into statute with clearly identified missions and budgets. It also means building a broad base of support. Councils driven by only one strong leader – a governor or legislator – are vulnerable to shifts in the political wind.

Imposed Agendas – Prodding or support from funders and advocates outside the state can be a catalyst, but trying to force change in systems from the outside doesn't work. The state and its stakeholders must take ownership of the initiative because they are the ones who will devise the strategies, implement the plans, deal with the politics, and live with the results.

J. Hutchins, *Coming Together for Children and Families*, 1998

Challenges

- *Funding.* Locating a source of adequate and ongoing funding is difficult; a related challenge is being able to use funds flexibly.
- *Political climate of the state.* Politics can strongly influence whether there is support for collaboration, youth development, and the work of the group. Changes in administration, and legislative turnover, can impact support for existing efforts. For example, the Alaska Governor's Children's Cabinet, established in 1995, is no longer active under the current governor.
- *Communication.* Keeping people on the same message and "in the loop" is difficult.
- *Logistics.* Scheduling and bringing state agencies and other partners together is difficult due to busy schedules and limited time.
- *Setting priorities; measuring outcomes.* States are increasingly using outcomes to determine performance. Identifying and measuring outcomes across agencies is a difficult and challenging task.
- *Turf issues.* Defending institutional turf is a barrier common to most, if not all,

collaboratives that work across departmental and governmental lines.

- *Youth involvement.* Bringing youth to the table creates challenges. In general, youth do not trust adults, and adults are not ready to work with youth. Flexibility is necessary to accommodate youth's schedules and needs (such as holding meetings outside of school hours, arranging transportation, etc.). In addition, the frequent turnover of youth participants due to graduation, job changes, etc. may affect the continuity of the collaborative council.

COLLABORATIVE COUNCIL PROFILE: MAINE CHILDREN'S CABINET

Former Governor Angus King and First Lady Mary Herman created the Maine Children's Cabinet in 1996 as a way to oversee and coordinate policies and programs for children in Maine. In 2000, the Cabinet was established in statute "to collaborate to create, manage, and promote coordinated policies, programs, and service delivery systems." The Cabinet – within the governor's office – is intended to produce integrated approaches to state level issues, decrease gaps in services, and increase communication between state agencies and local community organizations.

The current governor expanded the role of the Children's Cabinet. The First Lady chairs the Cabinet; it includes the commissioners of the Departments of Education, Health and Human Services, Public Safety, Corrections, Labor; senior staff (deputies and other key staff); and the chairs of the Regional Children's Cabinets.

The Cabinet has created several statewide initiatives. One is the *Communities for Children and Youth*, a partnership between state government and local communities that promotes positive child and youth development. Its goals are to 1) measurably improve the well-being of children in every community, and 2) increase educational attainment and achievement levels of all children. Over 70 communities (representing 325 municipalities and 70 percent of the state's population) have joined this initiative.

The Cabinet has also addressed a range of issues, including youth homelessness, suicide prevention, and health systems in schools. The state tracks the results of these initiatives with a tool – *Maine Marks* – that measures 80 different social behavioral indicators.

One of the hallmarks of the Children's Cabinet's approach is a close collaboration with the University of Maine, primarily through the Edmund S. Muskie Institute for Public Sector Innovation.

Additional information on the Maine Children's Cabinet can be found on its website at <http://www.maine.gov/cabinet>.

TABLE 3 STATE GOVERNMENT STRUCTURES: COLLABORATIVE COUNCILS

STATE	STRUCTURE & AUTHORITY	YOUTH	FUNDING & STAFFING	PURPOSE & ACTIVITIES	STRENGTHS & CHALLENGES
Arizona <i>FYSB</i> <i>NCPC</i>	Arizona Statewide Youth Development Task Force <i>Executive</i>	Yes	<i>Funding:</i> State/Arizona Positive Youth Development Initiative and other Governor's Office sources <i>Staffing:</i> 3 part-time	Working to build a comprehensive framework for youth development that will support the positive development of youth and successful transition from youth to adulthood; focus is on four policy areas – education, youth workforce development, youth voice and advocacy, and positive youth development	<i>Strengths:</i> Support from the Governor, community-driven process, availability of technical assistance, collaboration, and inclusiveness <i>Challenges:</i> Involving youth, as meetings are often during the day
California <i>NCPC</i>	California Collaborative on Youth Development <i>Informal</i>	No	<i>Funding:</i> None <i>Staffing:</i> None	Promote youth development in state and local level policy	<i>Strengths:</i> Has existed in spite of no authority/funding, etc. for several years <i>Challenges:</i> Including youth, current lack of legislative and executive support
Colorado* <i>FYSB</i> <i>NGA</i>	Colorado Interagency Prevention Council <i>Executive</i>	Φ	<i>Funding:</i> Federal <i>Staffing:</i> Φ	Coordinate state prevention programs for the purpose of advancing the well-being of Colorado's youth, families, and communities	Φ

TABLE 3 STATE GOVERNMENT STRUCTURES: COLLABORATIVE COUNCILS

STATE	STRUCTURE & AUTHORITY	YOUTH	FUNDING & STAFFING	PURPOSE & ACTIVITIES	STRENGTHS & CHALLENGES
Connecticut <i>FYSB</i> <i>NCPC</i>	Connecticut Commission on Children <i>Legislative</i>	No	<i>Funding:</i> Federal; State; Grant <i>Staffing:</i> 6 full-time	Promote public policy on behalf of children and families	<i>Strengths:</i> Flexibility to serve three branches of government; access to state government leadership <i>Challenges:</i> Funding
Delaware	Delaware Partnership for Positive Youth Development <i>Informal</i>	Yes	<i>Funding:</i> Federal; State <i>Staffing:</i> 1 full-time, 1 seasonal	Promote positive youth development through youth, adult and community partnerships; create an on-line resource manual	<i>Strengths:</i> Youth participation; connection between youth and adults; provides incentive to youth for civic engagement <i>Challenges:</i> Partnership dynamics between youth and adults; meeting logistics; rigid cultural roles for youth
Georgia	First Lady's Children's Cabinet Φ	No	<i>Funding:</i> Φ <i>Staffing:</i> Φ	Create coordinated policies and service delivery systems that support children, families, and communities – collaborate actively in sharing resources and reducing barriers; implement a strategic plan; and be accountable for outcomes.	Φ
Illinois* <i>FYSB</i> <i>NGA</i>	State Commission/ Council Φ	Φ	<i>Funding:</i> Federal <i>Staffing:</i> Φ	Maximize potential for youth to become self-sufficient adults; target services/collaboration at local level	Φ

TABLE 3 STATE GOVERNMENT STRUCTURES: COLLABORATIVE COUNCILS

STATE	STRUCTURE & AUTHORITY	YOUTH	FUNDING & STAFFING	PURPOSE & ACTIVITIES	STRENGTHS & CHALLENGES
Indiana* <i>FYSB</i>	State Youth Development Committee <i>Legislative</i>	Φ	<i>Funding:</i> Federal <i>Staffing:</i> Φ	Create partnership among federal, state and local levels, promote youth development principles, and develop statewide youth development agenda	Φ
Iowa <i>FYSB</i> <i>NCPC</i> <i>NGA</i>	Iowa Collaboration for Youth Development <i>Informal</i>	Yes	<i>Funding:</i> Federal, State; Points of Light Foundation Grant <i>Staffing:</i> 2 full-time, 2 part-time, extensive in-kind from 9 state agencies	Promote policy alignment and coordination; build capacity; mobilize community; and involve youth in policy making	<i>Strengths:</i> State agencies' commitment; noticeable change and impact; and ICYD is the infrastructure of the Iowa's Promise Initiative <i>Challenges:</i> need for more grassroots support and youth involvement; slow change process; communication among partners and stake holders
Kentucky* <i>FYSB</i> <i>NCPC</i> <i>NGA</i>	Kentucky Youth Development Partnership (Kentucky Child Now) <i>Informal</i>	Yes	<i>Funding:</i> Grants <i>Staffing:</i> Φ	Promote positive youth development and foster collaboration at state/local levels; involve youth in policy, planning, governance, assessment and delivery of services	Φ

TABLE 3 STATE GOVERNMENT STRUCTURES: COLLABORATIVE COUNCILS

STATE	STRUCTURE & AUTHORITY	YOUTH	FUNDING & STAFFING	PURPOSE & ACTIVITIES	STRENGTHS & CHALLENGES
Louisiana* <i>FYSB</i> <i>NGA</i>	Louisiana Youth Policy Network <i>Executive</i>	Φ	<i>Funding:</i> Federal <i>Staffing:</i> Φ	Make policy recommendations; develop <i>Louisiana Blueprint for Investing in Youth</i> , that includes vision, fundamental assumptions, strategies/ processes, and outcomes/ long-term impacts	Φ
Maine	Children's Cabinet <i>Legislative</i>	Yes	<i>Funding:</i> State and Collaborative Federal Grant Admin Fees <i>Staffing:</i> 3 full-time	Actively collaborate to create and promote coordinated policies and service delivery systems that support children, families and communities: establish administrative priorities on children and youth issues, and put into action the Governor's commitment to better outcomes for Maine's children through shared coordination and accountability	<i>Strengths:</i> Well-coordinated systems; youth identified needs <i>Challenges:</i> Meeting logistics; funding
Massachusetts <i>FYSB</i> <i>NGA</i>	Youth Development Advisory Council <i>Executive</i>	Yes	<i>Funding:</i> Federal; State <i>Staffing:</i> 1 full-time, 1 part-time	Advise the Executive Office of Health and Human Services regarding youth development policy, assist in implementation of initiatives, increase collaboration among state agencies, and facilitate communication	<i>Strengths:</i> Innovative; effective policy and legislative changes <i>Challenges:</i> Youth turn-over; meeting logistics; funding; partnership dynamics between youth and adults

TABLE 3 STATE GOVERNMENT STRUCTURES: COLLABORATIVE COUNCILS

STATE	STRUCTURE & AUTHORITY	YOUTH	FUNDING & STAFFING	PURPOSE & ACTIVITIES	STRENGTHS & CHALLENGES
Michigan*	Children's Cabinet Φ	Φ	Φ	Strengthen early childhood development and education programs	Φ
Maryland* <i>FYSB</i>	State Youth Development Collaboration Project <i>Executive</i>	Φ	<i>Funding:</i> Federal <i>Staffing:</i> Φ	Promote adoption of youth development practices by state and community agencies; enhance collaboration to improve outcomes	Φ
Montana	Interagency Coordinating Council <i>Legislative</i>	No	<i>Funding:</i> None <i>Staffing:</i> 1 Full-time support staff	Provide communication and coordination among departments around five goals: child abuse and neglect; youth substance abuse; youth violence; teen pregnancy; and high school dropouts	<i>Strengths:</i> Communication <i>Challenges:</i> Lack of leadership; funding; lack of staff; looks good on paper but not in the "real world"
New Jersey	Governor's Cabinet for Children <i>Executive</i>	No	<i>Funding:</i> None <i>Staffing:</i> 1 Part-time (and in-kind support from State Department of Human Services)	Coordinate and marshal state resources to deliver the highest level of service to children	<i>Strengths:</i> Final realization by state departments that child abuse and neglect is everybody's problem <i>Challenges:</i> "Crisis" issues impede the ability to focus on other issues

TABLE 3 STATE GOVERNMENT STRUCTURES: COLLABORATIVE COUNCILS

STATE	STRUCTURE & AUTHORITY	YOUTH	FUNDING & STAFFING	PURPOSE & ACTIVITIES	STRENGTHS & CHALLENGES
New Mexico	Children's Cabinet <i>Executive</i>	No	<i>Funding:</i> Grant <i>Staffing:</i> 1 full-time, 1 part-time	Increase interaction among state departments to reduce bureaucratic red tape; track well-being indicators for youth	<i>Strengths:</i> Coordinating services; better use of money; policy experts in have power make changes; Governor wants youth to succeed and supports them <i>Challenges:</i> Funding; turf issues
New York <i>FYSB</i> <i>NGA</i>	Partners for Children (Youth Development Team) <i>Informal</i> (Office of Youth Development)	No	<i>Funding:</i> Federal <i>Staffing:</i> None (1 full-time funding was previously available)	Further youth development by collaborating and providing statewide training, education, and research to other state and local agencies	<i>Strengths:</i> Coalition is voluntary so members have a strong commitment; communities request their trainings <i>Challenges:</i> Keeping people on the same message; building knowledge into action; and funding
North Dakota	Youth Development Council <i>Legislative</i> <i>Executive</i>	Yes	<i>Funding:</i> Federal <i>Staffing:</i> 1 full-time	Develop youth employment and training policy; establish links with other state and local youth services providers to bring an integrated approach to youth development; plan and recommend policies and oversight of youth programs under the Workforce Investment Act	<i>Strengths:</i> Funding; brings together different agencies, nonprofits and private companies to strategize about youth <i>Challenges:</i> Federal funding makes spending inflexible due to mandates

TABLE 3 STATE GOVERNMENT STRUCTURES: COLLABORATIVE COUNCILS

STATE	STRUCTURE & AUTHORITY	YOUTH	FUNDING & STAFFING	PURPOSE & ACTIVITIES	STRENGTHS & CHALLENGES
Oklahoma <i>NGA</i>	Oklahoma Commission on Children and Youth <i>Legislative</i>	No	<i>Funding:</i> Federal; State <i>Staffing:</i> 23 full-time	Provide oversight for state agencies; promote community planning and coordination	<i>Strengths:</i> One entity responsible for coordinating state agencies; ability to create collaboratives in counties <i>Challenges:</i> Funding
Oregon <i>FYSB</i> <i>NCPC</i>	Commission on Children and Families (Youth Development Policy Council) <i>Legislative</i>	Yes	<i>Funding:</i> Federal; State; Grant <i>Staffing:</i> 1 full-time, 1 part-time	Establish statewide policies for services; support local commissions; build policy framework; and evaluate progress	<i>Strengths:</i> Youth development is being incorporated into existing agencies; mentoring youth <i>Challenges:</i> More coordinated efforts are needed in planning strength-based strategies; funding
Pennsylvania	Children's Cabinet and Advisory Commission <i>Executive</i>	No	<i>Funding:</i> State <i>Staffing:</i> None	Coordinate and streamline programs; identify system barriers propose solutions	<i>Strengths:</i> Too new to tell <i>Challenges:</i> Funding; finding appropriate staff
Rhode Island	Youth Development Advisory Committee <i>Legislative</i>	No	<i>Funding:</i> Grant <i>Staffing:</i> None (1 full-time when funding was available)	Facilitate communication; coordinate state services; and pool resources to leverage funding	<i>Strengths:</i> The subcommittee members work directly with clients so information from the field is easily accessible; members are competent; community thinks committee is good <i>Challenges:</i> Funding; lack of clear direction; turf issues

TABLE 3 STATE GOVERNMENT STRUCTURES: COLLABORATIVE COUNCILS

STATE	STRUCTURE & AUTHORITY	YOUTH	FUNDING & STAFFING	PURPOSE & ACTIVITIES	STRENGTHS & CHALLENGES
Tennessee	Children's Cabinet <i>Executive</i>	No	<i>Funding:</i> None <i>Staffing:</i> None	Coordinate state resources; state agencies partner with the community to deliver a system of care that is child-entered, family-focused, community-based and culturally appropriate	<i>Strengths:</i> Members are the key people who have power to change and create policy <i>Challenges:</i> Lack of staff and expertise (there is no expert on children leading the cabinet), lack of accountability, and lack of funding
Utah	Family Agencies Communities Together / Coordinated Collaborative Services <i>Legislative</i>	No	<i>Funding:</i> State <i>Staffing:</i> None	Coordinate state resources and training; promote culturally sensitive practices, local interagency councils, and parent representation	<i>Strengths:</i> Good leadership from executive directors; funding to get established <i>Challenges:</i> Turf issues
Vermont	State Team for Children, Families and Individuals Φ	No	Φ	Works with 12 Regional Partnerships to improve the well being of all Vermonters through fostering collaborative systems and reciprocal relationships between communities and state government	Φ

TABLE 3 STATE GOVERNMENT STRUCTURES: COLLABORATIVE COUNCILS

STATE	STRUCTURE & AUTHORITY	YOUTH	FUNDING & STAFFING	PURPOSE & ACTIVITIES	STRENGTHS & CHALLENGES
West Virginia	Governor's Cabinet on Children and Families <i>Legislative</i>	No	<i>Funding:</i> Federal; State <i>Staffing:</i> 6 Full-time	Bring state agencies and local groups together to promote the well-being of children and families	<i>Strengths:</i> Effective local-level coordination <i>Challenges:</i> Gubernatorial leadership is critical; focusing on outcomes; cross agency coordination; clear communication of strategy; stakeholders need better understanding of existing programs and resources
Wisconsin NGA	Φ <i>Anticipated to be established by Executive Order, 2005</i>	No	<i>Funding:</i> Φ <i>Staffing:</i> Φ	Φ	<i>Strengths:</i> Φ <i>Challenges:</i> Φ
<p>FYSB = This state received funding from the Family Youth Services Bureau NCPC = This state received funding from the National Council on Crime Prevention NGA = This state received technical assistance from the National Governor's Association Center for Best Practices</p> <p>*Information for these states was obtained from following sources: <i>Youth Boards, Commissions, Councils, Task Forces</i> (2004), <i>Civic and Policy Engagement of Youth</i> (2004), and <i>Youth Programs</i>, National Conference of State Legislatures; <i>State Youth Development Strategies to Improve Outcomes for At-Risk Youth</i> (2000) and <i>A Governor's Guide to Children's Cabinets</i> (2004), NGA Center for Best Practices; <i>Innovative State Strategies to Promote Youth Development</i> (2002) and <i>How Youth Become Effective Citizens: Models for Engaging Youth in Policy</i> (2003), American Youth Policy Forum; <i>FOCUS: State Youth Policy, Principles for Supporting Youth</i> (2002), The Forum for Youth Investment; and the Department of Health and Human Services, Family and Youth Services Bureau.</p>					

CONTINUING EFFORTS

Several states are moving ahead in their efforts to coordinate youth services and policy, and promote youth development. For example, many applied for technical assistance jointly offered by the National Conference of State Legislatures, the National Governors Association Center for Best Practices, and the Forum for Youth Investment. (California did not apply.) The thirteen states selected recently sent teams of legislators and executive staff to a three-day Youth Policy Institute to develop specific initiatives.¹¹

States are working on a variety of efforts. The Arizona state team strategy is to build relationships between the legislature, key youth policy staff in the Governor's office, and the Youth Development Task Force that is working to create a statewide youth development framework for Arizona. The Connecticut team plans to promote collaboration by meeting with legislative, judicial and executive leaders and expanding the coalition group; they would like to develop a youth development plan for Connecticut's youth, and build a state-level library of information on youth development programs. The Kentucky state team intends to create a cabinet level Policy Group to gain consensus on youth policy goals, outcomes, a framework for action, and evaluation; they also want to develop accounting protocols to provide feedback to policymakers.

State teams from Iowa, New Mexico, and Tennessee plan to inventory programs and budgets to determine what types of services are already being funded for youth and existing funding sources and levels. In addition, Iowa wants to explore ways to keep youth engaged, and to maintain communication between the executive and legislative branches. New Mexico's team will be talking to the legislative leadership about creating a select committee on children and youth. The Wyoming team is also recommending the creation of a standing legislative committee on children and families.

South Dakota plans to convene community meetings to get broad-based input on a statewide, community-based youth initiative that will form the basis for legislation to create a Youth Commission. The Commission will coordinate and leverage all state resources that are used for youth services.

In addition to these state action plans, North Carolina recently enacted legislation that created a state commission and work group to improve the coordination and delivery of services for children and youth. The commission will study and recommend changes to improve collaboration and coordination among state agencies. The work group will identify common outcome measures for agencies; identify strategies for funding flexibility between state and local agencies; develop a common terminology across agencies; make recommendations regarding a shared database to track outcomes while protecting confidentiality; develop mechanisms to share information about children receiving multiple services; and increase coordination and collaboration around state and local training needs.

NATIONAL COORDINATION EFFORTS

FEDERAL YOUTH POLICY EFFORTS

The federal government has previously supported state-level youth policy coordination efforts. In 1998 and 2002, the federal Health and Human Services Department Family and Youth Services Bureau awarded three-year State Youth Development Collaboration grants to thirteen states. The purpose of this broad-based, multi-year effort was to help states take action to create policies and structures to increase the effectiveness of youth policy efforts. It was also intended to develop and support innovative youth development strategies. (California did not apply for grants during either funding cycle.)¹²

In 2001, the National Council on Crime Prevention (NCCP) also provided funding and technical assistance to support and implement preventive efforts, including innovative youth development strategies. Six states, including California, received NCCP grants.

WHITE HOUSE TASK FORCE ON DISADVANTAGED YOUTH

In late 2002, the President established the White House Task Force for Disadvantaged Youth to develop a comprehensive federal response to the needs of this population, with an emphasis on enhanced agency accountability and effectiveness. The Task Force report, issued in October 2003, describes the current federal response as lacking in focus: *“the complexity of the problems faced by disadvantaged youth is matched only by the complexity of the traditional Federal response to those problems. Both are confusing, complicated, and costly.”*¹³

The report presents a national youth policy framework that could serve as a guide for investing in programs and help maximize the return on the federal investment. The framework is an outcome-focused approach that encompasses four guiding principles: Better Management, Better Accountability, Better Connections, and Give Priority to the Neediest Youth. The Task Force defined as desirable outcomes for disadvantaged youth to be:

- Healthy and Safe
- Ready for Work, College, and Military Service
- Ready for Marriage, Family, and Parenting
- Ready for Civic Engagement and Service

The Task Force proposed the creation of a Disadvantaged Youth Policy Initiative, to be coordinated through the Executive Office of the President. Its purpose would be to develop and coordinate policy, maximize interagency collaboration, coordinate federal research, and promote successful program models.

FEDERAL LEGISLATION

Younger Americans Act

Federal policymakers have previously embraced the youth development model as a guiding framework to improve the effectiveness of youth programs. In September 2000, legislation establishing a Younger Americans Act – modeled after the Older Americans Act – was introduced in both the House (H.R. 17) and Senate (S. 1005).

The bills would have created a national youth policy and authorized federal funds to mobilize communities to ensure that all youth “have access to the competencies and character development they need to be fully prepared and effective citizens.” Specifically, the legislation would have:

- strengthened resources for communities to provide on-going relationships with caring adults,
- provided safe places with structured activities during non-school hours,
- increased access to services that promote healthy lifestyles,
- stressed development of marketable skills and competencies, and
- offered opportunities for community service and civic participation.

FEDERAL YOUTH DEVELOPMENT COUNCIL

The Federal Youth Coordination Act (H.R. 4703) would establish the *Youth Development Council* to improve communication and increase accountability among the 16 federal agencies that serve youth.

The council would assess the needs of these agencies, and provide support to state-level coordination efforts. It also would set quantifiable goals and objectives for federal programs, develop demonstration projects focusing on special populations, and research and replicate model programs.

Its membership would include agency secretaries, representatives of youth-serving organizations, and youth.

In spite of strong grassroots support and 80 House co-sponsors, these bills did not get out of committee. Funding reportedly played a part in this failure, as did the difficulty in describing the concept of youth development and the expected activities and outcomes to policymakers.¹⁴

Federal Youth Coordination Act

In response to the 2002 White House Task Force report, bipartisan legislation, the Federal Youth Coordination Act (H.R. 4703), was introduced in late June 2004, and again in February 2005. The Act proposes to create a federal youth coordinating entity – the Youth Development Council. The council’s purpose would be to evaluate, coordinate, and improve the myriad of federal youth serving programs (see box).

APPENDIX A

STATE SURVEY ON YOUTH DEVELOPMENT STRUCTURES

Introduction

The California Research Bureau (CRB) provides nonpartisan research to the Governor's office, Legislature, and other elected officials. The CRB is conducting a survey to identify other states' efforts relating to ongoing youth development structures within state government. We understand that several states have established children's cabinets, youth councils, or similar entities that coordinate efforts of youth-serving agencies and include youth development principles. Other states have included youth in the policy-making process. The CRB would like to know your state's approach.

Survey Question Outline

Structure Description

Model (council, collaborative, etc.)

Prototype (i.e. another state used as a blueprint)

Authority

Statute/Administrative Action (example: Executive Order)

Date Established

Partners and Stakeholders

Purpose and Activities

Goals

Principles

Objectives

Staffing Level and Source

Training (youth participants, staff, adult participants)

Communication (publications, reports, minutes)

Source/Level of Funding

Youth Participation

Selection Process

Age Range

Diversity Representation

Ratio of Youth to Adults

Accountability (evaluation activities)

Assessment Tool

Frequency of Measurement

Strengths (can provide confidentiality)

Challenges (can provide confidentiality)

Definitions

Youth

Youth Development

At Risk

Beyond Risk

Others?

State Contact Information:

APPENDIX B

POLICYMAKERS: A CHECKLIST OF YOUTH DEVELOPMENT PRINCIPLES



Policymakers: A Checklist of Youth Development Principles



We envision all California's youth living in communities that support their development and a service delivery system that is comprehensive, collaborative, youth and family centered, and focused on youth development principles and practices. We envision policymakers creating and supporting policies that are research-based and reflect youth as a top priority.

To further this vision, the California Collaborative for Youth Development offers the following principles and a checklist of important questions as a guide for policymakers when creating, modifying, supporting, and/or funding youth policy and programs.

Instilling youth development principles in state and local policy is a cost effective means of ensuring that California youth live in communities that support their development as positive, contributing members of society.

General Principles for Youth Policy Development:

- Communities fund, coordinate, and evaluate community-wide initiatives that address the needs of its youth. They engage collaborative teams that include researchers, practitioners, funders, youth and policymakers. State and local funding include these requirements.
- Youth programs are funded based on research and on the achievement of identifiable results.
- Youth programs have enough funding to include an evaluation process that involves youth, family, and community members. Evaluations include identifying best practices in youth development.
- Community program staff and volunteers providing youth services are knowledgeable and use youth development principles in their training, program delivery, and evaluation.

Checklist developed
by the California
Collaborative for
Youth Development,
May 2004

Important Questions To Develop State and Local Policy for Youth (check box if response is "Yes"):

- ☐ Is this policy or program based on research?
- ☐ Does this policy or program promote and support youth acquiring positive personal and social skills and abilities?
- ☐ Does this policy or program encourage, support, and assist communities to create an environment where programs for youth are essential services and have priority with health and safety?
- ☐ Does this policy or program promote and support an environment and activities that contribute to current well-being, and a successful transition from childhood and adolescence to adulthood, for youth?
- ☐ Does this policy or program promote a variety of opportunities that are appealing to all youth in the community? Does it target disadvantaged and underserved youth in the community? Does it promote equal availability, accessibility and quality opportunities for all young people?
- ☐ Does this policy or program require new programs to coordinate with established youth programs in the community? Does it promote collaboration among programs?

California Collaborative for Youth Development

Alliance for Education Solutions
California 4-H Youth Development Program
California Attorney General
California Coalition for Youth
California Department of Education
California Department of Health Services
California Department of Mental Health
California Friday Night Live Partnership
California Park & Recreation Society
California State Library
California Workforce Investment Board
Cenic Digital California Project
Center for Community Schools Partnerships
Community Network For Youth Development
Governor's Office of Planning and Research
Governor's Office on Service & Volunteerism
John W. Gardner Center for Youth and Their Communities
Senate Office of Research
Senate Select Committee on Family, Child, & Youth Development
Youth Leadership Institute

YOUTH DEVELOPMENT PRINCIPLES

Youth development is an approach that builds on youth's assets and their potential. Key principles¹ of youth development are:

¹ U.S. Department of Health & Human Services, Administration of Children and Families, "Towards a Blueprint for Youth: Making Positive Youth Development a National Priority," www.acf.dhhs.gov/programs/fysb/youthinfor/blueprint.htm

- Providing youth with safe and supportive environments.
- Fostering relationships between youth and caring adults who can mentor and guide them.
- Supporting development of youth's knowledge and skills in a variety of ways, including study, tutoring, sports, the arts, vocational education and service learning.
- Engaging youth as active partners and leaders who can help move communities forward.
- Providing opportunities for youth to show that they care – about others and society.
- Promoting healthy lifestyles and teaching positive patterns of social interactions.

SUMMARY OF RECENT RESEARCH

Youth Development Approach Results in Positive Outcomes and is Cost Effective

The National Research Council and Institute of Medicine report is based on scientific evidence from a variety of studies in family, schools, and community settings. It concludes that adolescents who grow up in communities rich in developmental opportunities for them show evidence of higher rates of positive development and lower incidences of problem behaviors such as early pregnancy, drug use, and delinquency. Further, communities that offer a diversity of program opportunities that provide continued exposure to positive experiences, settings, and people are more likely to support broad adolescent development and meet the needs of a greater number of youth.

[National Research Council and Institute of Medicine. *Community Programs to Promote Youth Development*. Committee on Community-Level Programs for Youth. Jacquelynne Eccles and Jennifer A. Gootman, eds. Washington, DC: National Academy Press. 2002.]

The Search Institute's latest research on developmental assets – including the first longitudinal studies and studies that link assets to actual school records – adds to the growing evidence that comprehensive, asset-based approaches to education and youth development have tremendous potential to contribute to the academic success of students from all backgrounds and in a wide range of communities. Students with more assets reported higher grades; low-income students with more assets were dramatically more likely to do well in school and avoid school problems. (Assets include support, empowerment, boundaries and expectations, constructive use of time, commitment to learning, positive values, social competencies, and positive identity.)

[Search Institute. "Boosting Student Achievement: New Research on the Power of Developmental Assets." *Insights and Evidence*, vol. 1 no. 1., October 2003.]

New findings from the brain and behavioral sciences sheds important light on the biological need for youth to be part of a network of enduring relationships linked to moral and spiritual meaning. A recent report from the Commission on Children at Risk (a group of children's doctors, research scientists, and mental health and youth service professionals) concludes that human beings are hardwired to form relationships and that nurturing environments powerfully affect brain development. Recent research indicates that the adolescent propensity for risk taking, novelty seeking, excitement, and peer affiliation is

partly biologically based – a conclusion that highlights the importance of the social environments that we create, or fail to create, to meet these needs in our youth.

[The Commission on Children at Risk. *Hardwired to Connect: The New Scientific Case for Authoritative Communities*. An initiative of the YMCA of the USA, Dartmouth Medical School, and the Institute for American Values. New York: Institute for American Values. 2003.]

Research from California and across the nation shows that quality after-school programs can cut juvenile crime and violence, reduce adolescent sex and pregnancy, cut substance use, and prevent school discipline problems. They can also increase academic achievement, reduce dropout rates, promote civic participation, and provide experiences and opportunities that youth need to succeed. Investing in after-school programs also saves taxpayers' money. One study of a high school after-school program concluded that it resulted in nearly \$2.00 in crime savings alone for every dollar invested. When compared with California's "Three Strikes" law, the program was over five times more effective at preventing serious crimes than "Three Strikes."

[Fight Crime: Invest in Kids California. *California's Next After-School Challenge: Keeping High School Teen Off the Street and On the Right Track*. Oakland: Fight Crime: Invest in Kids California. 2004.]

Young people, on average, have a minimum of 1,900 hours per year of discretionary time without structure or supervision. In an attempt to quantify the cost of and return on investment for providing youth with developmental opportunities and supports, a formula was established to quantify the developmental supports that all youth need to become productive, economically viable adults. They determined that the minimum cost to provide youth development opportunities to young people beyond school hours is approximately \$3,000 per child per year. Further, they calculated that a sustained investment to develop youth into economically and socially viable adults can result in a potential return on investment of \$10.51 for every dollar spent.

[Newman, R.P., Smith, S.P., & Murphy, R. *A Matter of Money: The Cost and Financing of Youth Development in America*. Washington, DC: Academy for Educational Development (AED) – Center for Youth Development and Policy Research. 2001.]

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- ¹¹ *Youth Policy Institute Action Plans*, transmitted in e-mail from Stephanie Walton, National Conference of State Legislatures, October 10, 2005.
- ¹² Thaddeus Ferber and others, *State Youth Policy*.
- ¹³ White House Task Force for Disadvantaged Youth, *White House Task Force for Disadvantaged Youth Final Report*, Executive Summary (Washington, DC: Task Force, October 2003).
- ¹⁴ Anne Marie White, Speaker, *Adolescence and the Transitions to Adulthood: Rethinking Public Policy for a New Century*, conference sponsored by Chapin Hall for Children, University of Chicago and the MacArthur Research Network on Transitions to Adulthood and Public Policy, November 2004.